District Review Report
Final

School District No. 19 (Revelstoke)

March 25 - 27, 2003

Submitted to the Minister of Education

By District Review Team Chair
Wendy Herbert, Superintendent, School District No. 64 (Gulf Islands)

School District (#19) Revelstoke
School District Review Report

District Name:	Revelstoke
District Number:	#19
Superintendent:	Anne Cooper
Date of Visit:	March 24 - 27, 2003
Team Chair:	Wendy Herbert (Superintendent, Gulf Islands)
Team Members:	Cheryl Bulycz (Teacher, Prince George) Stan Corfe (Parent, Langley) Ross Dickson (Assistant Superintendent, Kamloops/Thompson) Marion Hunter (Principal, Kootenay Lake) Scott MacDonald (Ministry of Education)

Context

Revelstoke school district is located on the Trans Canada Highway adjacent to the Okanagan and Kootenay regions. Revelstoke is a mountain community with a population of 7,500 and the school district serves 1,395 students in five schools. The school district employs 86 professional staff (80 teachers and six principals and vice-principals), 56 support staff, and three district staff (Superintendent, Secretary/Treasurer and Director of Facilities/Transportation).

The school district has experienced a 21% enrolment decline over the past seven years and anticipates a further decline over the next several years. Last year, the school district closed one elementary school, using an inclusive process that has resulted in an amalgamated school.

Relationships among district partners are positive, open and collaborative. The small geographic area facilitates efficient and effective meetings along with other forms of communication.

The review team recognizes that the school district is in the early stages of linking school goals with district goals focused on student achievement. Schools are in the process of updating existing plans, which were developed using the accreditation model, and are moving to create clearly articulated goals that connect to the school district goals.

Summary of Process

The review team was welcomed with an informal dinner meeting with the Superintendent of Schools, Secretary Treasurer and Chair of the School Board. The formal review began with a presentation by district staff on the School District Accountability Contract and information about school district performance. The meeting was attended by Trustees, district senior staff, school principals and vice principal, the Revelstoke Teachers' Association President, and the CUPE President.

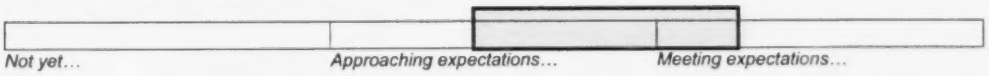
Subsequently, the team met for a minimum of two hours with the principal and representatives from each school:

- Arrow Heights Elementary
- Columbia Park Elementary
- Mountain View Elementary
- Mount Begbie Elementary
- Revelstoke Senior Secondary (including the Alternate Program)

In addition, the team met with the District Parent Advisory Committee and the District Student Services Staff. The team chair met twice with Superintendent to clarify information gathered to date.

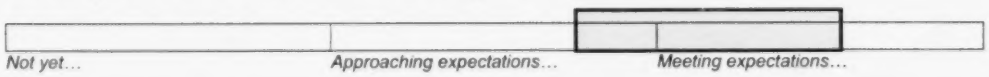
Observations in Key Areas - Focus on Student Achievement

1. **Goals**:
   Improving districts have a strong instructional focus. This focus is made visible in clear goals for improving student learning.



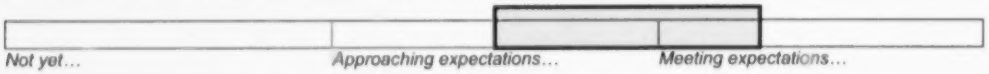
   - The school district has established six goals supporting academic achievement and one goal for social responsibility.
   - The school district, in partnership with each school, is working to improve the clarity and specificity of their goals (e.g., rationale, strategies, data to be collected, and performance targets).

2. **Rationale:**
   Improving districts have a thorough and connected set of reasons based on evidence for the selection of their student achievement goals.



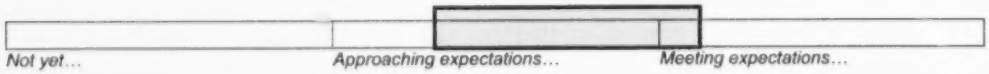
   - The rationale for the selection of the school district goals was clarified during the district presentation and is reasonable and appropriate for the goals identified.
   - Schools are in the process of developing rationales for their particular goals.

3. ***Data:***
Improving districts are actively considering at least three sources of evidence including classroom, school and district / provincial data. The analysis of this evidence has informed the selection of the district goals.



- The school district goals are primarily based on data gathered from provincial sources.
- The school district is in the process of developing systems to collect and use school and classroom based data to inform local practices.
- Some schools are using classroom, school, district and provincial data to facilitate planning and to measure student improvement.

4. ***Strategies:***
Improving districts have a well-organized, focused improvement plan in place. The strategies selected to achieve the goals are an intelligent blend of research, best practice, and innovative thinking.

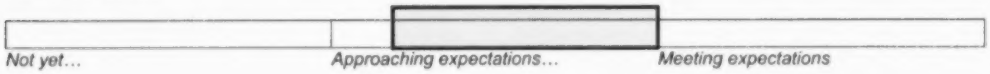


- The school district has selected appropriate and well-supported strategies to improve student literacy. Strategies to improve numeracy are formative and not yet fully developed.
- The graduation policy developed by the school board and implemented by the secondary school has improved graduation and dogwood completion rates.
- All schools continue to develop strategies to meet the social responsibility goal.

5. ***Structures:***
Improving districts have aligned structures – resources, time, organizations – to get the results they want. This includes effectively differentiating resources in the areas of highest need for improvement.

- The school district allocates resources to areas of highest need.
- Resources are consistently shifted to help schools meet goals and schools have the flexibility to shift resources to address these goals.

6. **Results:**
Improving districts get improved student learning results – at the classroom, school and district levels.

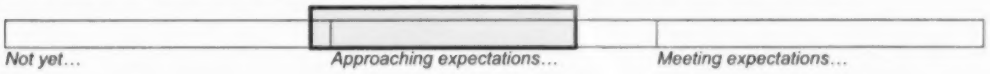


- At the district level, and using provincial data, student success is evident.
- Most schools are making progress toward identifying performance targets based on data.

7. **Communication:**
Improving districts communicate and make public their improvement goals and the progress being made.

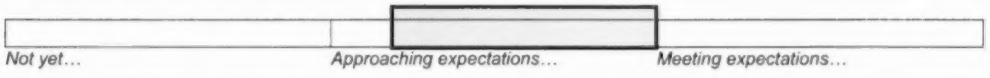
- The school district has established processes to communicate goals to improve student performance.
- All schools have the structures in place to communicate with the public.

8. **Teamwork (Coherence):**
Improving districts have a dynamic and interactive strategy for connecting school and district goals. School uniqueness and school district directions are both valued.



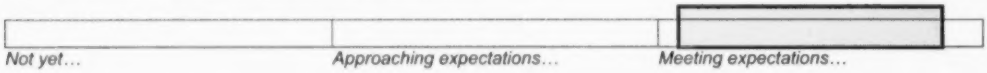
- The school district acknowledges the different needs and priorities of each school.
- All schools are focusing on social responsibility. A few schools have documented social responsibility goals that link to the school district's goals.
- Alignment of schools' student achievement goals with school district goals requires further development.

9. **Teamwork (District and Parent Involvement):**
Improving districts work as a team with parents, including specific groups of parents, on improving student learning.



- The district has established a process using School Planning Councils to actively involve parents in the development and implementation of school and district goals.

10. ***Leadership / Teamwork:***
Improving districts are led by district leaders with a clear vision for and commitment to school improvement and improving student achievement. Principals, vice principals, teacher, parent and student leadership is encouraged and systematically developed – with a focus on improving student learning.



- The school district demonstrates shared leadership and teamwork to ensure continual progress toward its goals.
- Professional development and leadership opportunities are available for all members of the school community.

Strengths

The team made the following observations of particular strengths related to student achievement:

- The district-wide early success initiative led by the literacy committee
- The ability to re-deploy staff and access outside resources, based on the district student services team recommendations, to provide immediate support to identified students
- The shared ownership of district issues and a collective focus on student learning
- The leadership model of the district team that promotes growth and continual development of all staff
- The high level of trust and respect among staff and partners in the district
- The enthusiasm and commitment to improving student achievement as a result of the inclusive decision-making process
- The school district's recognition of the time needed by School Planning Councils to prepare school plans and goals based on relevant data

Promising Practices

The team identified the following school district and school practices that could be helpful to other districts with a similar focus:

- The connection with families of pre-school aged children with Kindergarten "welcome and readiness" books: "*Entering the School System*" and "*Let's Learn Together*", including a feedback mechanism from parents
- The graduation policy developed and implemented by the board
- The broad representation on the literacy and numeracy committees
- The IEP/Accommondation Plans, in particular the templates of strategies, developed by the student services team and implemented by school-based staff

Recommendations

To strengthen school and district focus on student achievement and to improve results, the district review team recommends that School District #19 (Revelstoke):

- Formalize the process for determining the district goals in conjunction with school goals to ensure the school goals align with the school district goals
- Combine related goals and assist schools to determine relevant data, performance targets and dates
- Continue to identify and collect additional school and district-based data along with provincial data

Follow Up (to be determined by Ministry of Education)

Required follow up with specific time frame may take the form of:

- Ministry phone call
- Deputy Minister visit
- District report to the Ministry
- Review of the next year's district contract
- Special Advisor appointment